



# Opening and welcome

Alberto Tesi

On the behalf of the University of Florence it is a great pleasure to welcome you all to the international seminary Global interoperability and linked data. First of all, I would like to thank the organizers, the many supporting institutions - Istituto centrale per il catalogo unico delle biblioteche italiane (ICCU), Biblioteca nazionale centrale di Firenze (BNCF), Casalini Libri, Comune di Firenze, Conferenza dei rettori delle università italiane (CRUI), Associazione italiana biblioteche (AIB), Istituto di teoria e tecniche dell'informazione giuridica del Consiglio nazionale delle ricerche (ITTIG-CNR), Fondazione Rinascimento digitale – and the chair, professor and colleague Mauro Guerrini, for giving us the opportunity to discuss about the very important and very timely theme of open data. Just few weeks ago I was representing the Italian rectors to a meeting of EUA (European University Association) in Bruxelles where the focus was on open science, which of course is something more general than open data and open access. I was impressed to hear about the story of Tim Gowers, a mathematician which posed on his blog an unsolved problem. He was contacted by many other researchers and received almost one thousand substantive contributions which finally made it possible to solve the problem in only one month. It is clear that to make such processes a reliable way to approach scientific developments, it is necessary that the scientific and aca-



demic community will overcome several obstacles. I believe the most important ones are probably coming from inside the universities, such as the criteria for credit and promotion of researchers. On the other hand, it is also clear that these processes are potentially able to provide an enormous increase of knowledge and to allow for solving many demanding problems in all the scientific areas. In any case it is very important that open science, and hence open data, would become a more central theme of the scientific community. I wish that today you will exploit this seminary also to discuss about fundamental issues, such as infrastructures for connecting and linking data and procedures to certify quality of data, which I believe are at the basis of the development of a real open data. Let me conclude this brief welcome by thanking very much again the organizers, the speakers, all the colleagues and students that are attending this seminary. I really hope that you will enjoy the program lectures as well as your staying at the University of Florence.

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Tesi, A. "Opening and welcome". *JLIS.it*. Vol. 4, n. 1 (Gennaio/January 2013): Art: #7441. DOI: [10.4403/jlis.it-7441](https://doi.org/10.4403/jlis.it-7441). Web.

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Published: 2013-01-15

